

Rare Animals of Louisiana



Wilson's Plover

Charadrius wilsonia

Rarity Rank: S1S3B,S3N/G5

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure

Identification:

- Medium in size, though larger than other ringed plovers in America
- Length is between 16.5 and 20 cm and wingspread is 11 to 12.8 cm
- Large, black bill and flesh to pinkish colored legs
- Upper parts are grayish or brownish with white underparts
- Breast band ranges from black to brownish black

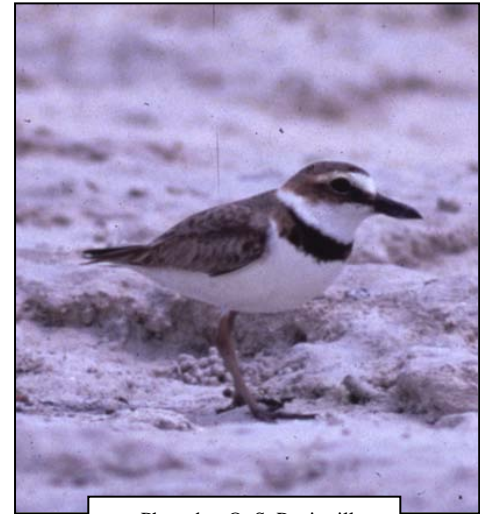


Photo by O. S. Pettingill

Habitat:

Coastal areas that are saline and thinly vegetated including salt flats, coastal lagoons, beaches and sand dunes

Food habits:

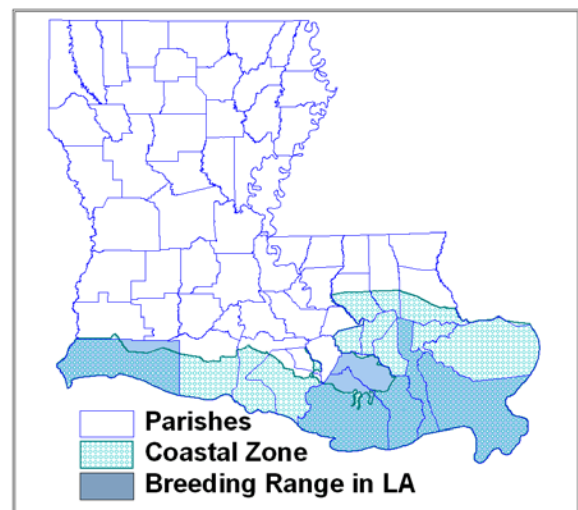
Feed on fiddler crabs and other crustaceans as well as various insects

Range:

- Breeding Range: Locally along the Atlantic coast from Virginia to South Florida, and also west along the Gulf coast into north Veracruz, Mexico; Baja California, Caribbean
- Winters mostly in northeastern Florida but also from central Florida west to Texas, then south through northern South America

Reproduction:

- Nests are scrapes made into the sand by males, and therefore require little work
- Males choose nesting areas close to debris for wind obstruction, though not commonly in vegetated areas
- Eggs oval to short oval in shape, cream to buff colored, and may have plenty of blotches and specks in black, brown or gray
- Clutch size is between two and four eggs
- Chicks may leave the nest within two hours of hatching



Range based on occurrences in Natural Heritage database

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Threats:

- Habitat loss and disturbance as a result of beachfront expansion
- Nesting area disturbance and trampling by humans, animals and vehicles
- Coastal land loss

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Rope off nesting areas during breeding seasons
- Restrict development in habitat

LA River Basins:

Pontchartrain, Mississippi, Barataria, Terrebonne, Mermentau, Calcasieu, Sabine

References:

Corbat, C. A., and P. W. Bergstrom. 2000. Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*). In The Birds of North America, No. 516 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Birds of North America, Inc., Philadelphia, PA.